

File 211

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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ARMY review completed.

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A. MORALE

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Definition

1. [] definition of morale in the Soviet Army was: "It is the combat spirit of the Soviet Army. It shows in the manner in which the personnel carry out their duties, the effort with which they train, and also in their loyalty to the party and their country." 25X1
- [] in the Soviet Army, morale was more closely tied in with the political attitude and loyalty of the individual to country and Party than to anything else. 25X1

Troop Political Indoctrination

2. The general theme continued to be that Americans were imperialists and, therefore, were considered the worst enemy of the USSR.
3. The greatest portion of political training was presented through scheduled lecture periods which totalled four hours weekly.¹ Besides the regularly scheduled political training periods, there were many other means employed to indoctrinate both officers and EM politically. Each company had a one-page "stengazeta" (wall newspaper). Platoons submitted political material for inclusion in this newspaper. The unit political officer wrote the editorial and was responsible for this newspaper.

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4. Each company also had a "political enlightenment dayroom" (komnata politicheskoy prosvettraboty) which contained all types of political literature, newspapers, and magazines, such as, The Red Star, Pravda, Izvestiya, Soviet Warrior, and Ogonëk. This room also contained a small library of selected political literature. The library books were taken to the field whenever the unit went on maneuvers. All sergeants were required to subscribe to the CGF newspaper, For Our Country's Honor (Za Chest Rodiny). The newspaper, Soviet Warrior, was the publication of source's division. Several copies were received by each company.
5. Each "political enlightenment dayroom" was equipped with a public address system that was hooked up in a regimental net. The master set was located in regimental headquarters. Selected news broadcasts and lectures from Moscow were cut into the system. Selected music, national songs, etc. were also put out over this system. In addition to this, the entire regimental caserne area had a loudspeaker system which also put out music and political themes.
6. Unit political officers often wrote letters to parents of soldiers in recognition of their sons' outstanding qualities or attention to political training. Usually the parents would acknowledge these letters with a letter of thanks; then the unit political officers would use these letters for further propaganda.
7. Another method of furthering political training was through movies. On Saturdays and Sundays, all EM went in formation to see films. Source knew of no entertainment films that were shown during these times. All films were either of an instructive or political nature. During the summer, films were shown in an outdoor theater which accommodated the entire regiment at one time. In the winter, units had to go to the indoor theater in shifts, since the theater was too small to accommodate them all at once.

Extent of Political Indoctrination Program

8. Political training was considered one of the most important subjects for both officers and EM. Although the training schedule called for a minimum of four hours of political training every week, with all the extra-curricular activities of a political nature, the total of hours spent weekly on political subjects was considerably more. It averaged approximately seven hours a week.
9. [redacted] almost all personnel were passive towards the entire program. Most were completely bored, especially if they were men in their last year of conscriptive service who had been subjected to the same political material over and over. A very small minority (about 5%) actually appeared to be interested and enthusiastic about political training. [redacted] this 5% was merely trying to gain personally as a result of this. For example, EM who distinguished themselves in political training became known as "otlichniki" and, as such, were eligible to be considered to receive leave. Others of the 5% were enthusiastic about the training merely to curry the favor of their superiors. Most of the EM pleaded ignorance about all political training even though they might have heard particular subjects over and over. Most EM daydreamed during political lectures. When called upon to recite, many EM would recite some memorized political drivel on an entirely different theme. Even though [redacted] unit received good ratings on political training during annual inspections, [redacted] it did not indicate the unit's real feelings or knowledge of political matters.

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10. Unit officers, other than the political officers, were particularly displeased with the political training program. These unit officers were forced to give a certain amount of political training to troops. They had to spend more time in lesson plans for political subjects than for any other subject. [redacted] it was almost impossible to write a lesson plan on a subject about which he knew nothing and cared less.) The Propaganda Officer of the regiment and some of the other political officers also had little feeling for their jobs. The Propaganda Officer usually told jokes during his lectures to officers; however, he told them where the subject material of his lecture could be found and advised them to take a look at it.¹

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Efficiency of the Political Program

11. In general, political training was well-organized and, since it was a required subject on the training schedule, there was no way to avoid it. There was much pressure from above to carry out the political program; consequently, the organization left little to be desired. During scheduled periods of political training, everything except required services ceased. All cooks, drivers, clerks, and other such personnel assembled for the meetings according to their group. There were attendance rosters that were required to be filled by group leaders. Although the organization of political training was good, the presentation was very poor and very boring. Source stated that it was impossible to know to what extent the program was successful. In his personal opinion, however, it was strictly passively received by the EM.

Political Organization in Soviet Units²

12. [redacted] there was a political administration for CGF which consisted of numerous unknown sections. This administration was located in Baden (N 48-01, E 16-14) at CGF Hq. [redacted] Higher than CGF level, the political activities of the Soviet Army were under the direction of the Chief Political Directorate. [redacted]
13. All unit political officers were subordinate to their respective unit commanders. They were also ex-officio personal affairs officers. They were to advise the CO on political and morale matters. In addition, they acted as inspector generals within the units, and were responsible for processing all complaints. [redacted] no political officers had any command responsibility.³

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B. SECURITY⁴

Informer Systems Within Army Units

14. Regimental special sections of counterintelligence organized their own informer-net system. It was impossible to tell who was recruited by this section. Informers could be officers, sergeants, or privates. The special section of counterintelligence often called in military personnel and it was impossible to know if those summoned were being accused of something or were being recruited as informers. Usually, the section chose as informers persons of weak character or those who were extremely ardent Communists. In the latter group were most unit political officers. All informers were commonly known as "seksoty" (secret informers). [redacted] at times one could surmise who some of these informers were by noting unusual transfers of certain individuals within the regiment. Usually, when a commander discovered an informer in his organization, he took steps to transfer him before the Special Section was aware of it. As a result of this informer system, all personnel in the Soviet Army had no choice but to keep their thoughts to themselves

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and to be extremely careful in their selection of friends.

Measures To Prevent Desertion and Surrender

15. Soviet soldiers were subject to heavy punishment for desertion. This was emphasized on the soldiers' oath, in regulations, and in Soviet law. [redacted] the usual punishment for desertion in time of peace was 25 years confinement; in time of war, desertion was punishable by death. The latest law also stated that a deserter's entire family was to suffer if they took part in aiding the desertion. It stated that a deserter's family would be sent to far Siberia and all its properties would be confiscated. Copies of this law were found in every unit political dayroom. All persons having knowledge of a desertion and not reporting it were also subject to punishment. The only other measures to prevent desertion was the fact that all conscripted EM during service beyond Soviet borders were usually totally limited in their amount of free time. In Austria it was impossible for an EM to be any place without his CO knowing exactly where he was, except for very short periods of time.

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Effectiveness of US and Allied Propaganda

16. [redacted] no counter-propaganda measures. Because it was forbidden to listen to any Western propaganda, there was no open obvious counter-measure propaganda at regimental or division levels directed against specific Western propaganda thrusts, since it would be an admission that people were listening to Western propaganda. In general, political officers made believe that there was no propaganda being received from the West.

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17. [redacted] it was forbidden for Soviet soldiers to read or hear friendly propaganda.

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[redacted] First, the Soviet soldier did not appreciate propaganda that would show him as being ignorant, illiterate, or backward. Also, any derogatory propaganda of a personal nature (e.g. that the Soviet soldier is dirty or wears a dirty uniform) [redacted] was harmful to the American cause. Since it was not the individual's fault that the Soviet soldier had to live under such conditions [redacted] US propaganda should explain the reasons as to why the Soviet soldier found himself in such a situation. [redacted] US propaganda tended to brag about the US strength, parallel to the manner that Hitler had bragged about German strength.

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18. It was impossible for most conscriptees to receive Western propaganda, either written or broadcast. Personnel such as radio operators, tankers, and others who were equipped with radios, possibly could get to hear Western broadcasts during training maneuvers, and then, only surreptitiously. [redacted]

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[redacted] in 1953 one of the EM who was in charge of the regimental loud speaker system had been listening to a Western broadcast and, when relieved for lunch, had merely switched off the system without changing stations. When he was relieved for lunch, the man relieving him had switched on the system and out in the loudspeakers, not realizing that it was tuned to a Western broadcast. As a result, a US program in the Russian language was broadcast for about 10 minutes before someone caught on and switched the system off. [redacted]

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19. [redacted] one unsuccessful attempt by unknown persons to pass leaflets into his regimental caserme area. These were picked up by the Regimental Duty Officer and the contents were never divulged. [redacted] it was practically impossible to reach EM of his unit through this manner. He has heard that

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leaflets had been successfully left in the 290th Gds. Rifle Regt. of his division. These had been left on the firing range used by the regiment. (The firing range was located some distance from the regiment and consequently was not guarded.) Although most officers had radios and most [] did listen to VOA or other Western broadcasts, it was impossible to draw an opinion from these officers since no one would admit that he listened to these broadcasts.

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Evidence of Friction

20. It was impossible to note any evidence of friction between the armed forces and the party in low-level units. [] undoubtedly friction existed in the hierarchy; however, in the low levels if there was any friction it was not recognizable as such.

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21. There was considerable friction and jealousy among all the various branches of the Soviet armed forces. Almost all other branches despised the infantry because the infantry was considered inferior. Even the mortar men in source's regiment made remarks unfavorable to the EM in the rifle companies. The infantry in turn despised the air force. [] there were always fights between air force men and infantrymen.

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[] this probably dated back to World War II days when the infantry accused the air force of indiscriminately dropping its bombs and ~~often~~ hitting friendly units. When asked if he considered all these differences as normal rivalries, he insisted that the extreme dislike, especially among World War II veterans, was genuine and quite serious at times.

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[] there were many battles between small groups or individuals of these two branches.

22. The only specific example []

[] In 1949 or 1950 [] in Brest when there was a battle between tankers and infantrymen which could not be quelled by the Komendatura. Several men were killed and many injured.

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[] in all seaport towns in the USSR, sailors of the Soviet fleet ruled, and [] it was unsafe for civilians or other branches of the military to walk the streets during hours of darkness.

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23. []

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[] quite frequently there were fights in towns between Hungarian and Soviet troops. No further information.

24. [] each Hungarian Army corps had a Soviet general officer as an advisor.

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[] the Soviet general had the last word.

25. [] no differences or any friction between troops from different parts of the USSR. There was a normal amount of individual fights between them that could not be considered as friction. For example [] among seven different ethnic groups, generally there was no friction except for an occasional complaint from soldiers of Tartar extraction that they had been belittled and called "Tartar snouts" (Tatarskiye mordy).

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26. [redacted] any friction which existed between officers and EM depended strictly on the type of officer and therefore varied. In general, [redacted] there was no friction between officers and EM who understood each other and merely did their military duty. 25X1

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Manpower, Equipment, and Supply Shortages⁶

29. [redacted] no dissatisfaction regarding defective equipment and weapons. [redacted] Soviet equipment and weapons were satisfactory. 25X1

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Fear of Allied Weapons by Soviet Troops

33. In general, Soviet troops knew little or nothing of American weapons. Soviet military personnel were told during political lectures that they had all kinds of weapons which could equal or surpass any American weapon; however, there was no specific mention made as to type, etc. [redacted] Soviet military personnel probably had more fear of atomic weapons than anything else, since the Soviet press was constantly pointing out the threat of US atomic weapons to the USSR. 25X1

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